

# THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED  
**THE NURSING RECORD**  
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No. 1,339

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1918.

Vol. LI.

## EDITORIAL.

### THE TEACHERS' REGISTER.

The Teachers of this country are to be congratulated that, after a hard struggle, they have at length succeeded in securing their registration under State authority, and last week the Teachers Registration Council met at the College of Preceptors, Bloomsbury Square, W.C., under the Chairmanship of Mr. A. H. D. Acland and defined the regulations qualifying for admission to the Register. The Council consists of 44 members representative in equal proportions of University, Elementary, Secondary and Specialist Teachers.

The main features of the conditions of admission are the inclusion in one Register, without differentiation of groups, of all teachers who have proved their right to be enrolled as duly qualified members of the teaching profession. Applicants for enrolment must be 25 years of age, and, after 1918, a training in teaching, as well as three years' continuous experience, will be demanded as a condition of enrolment.

There is one very noticeable omission in this Council which gathers up in a most comprehensive way representatives of all the teaching interests, namely that teachers of nursing are not represented, and we are forced to the conclusion that it is impossible that they should be, because, though in every hospital in the country Matrons and Sisters are engaged in teaching probationers—more or less efficiently—the important principles underlying this art, and of applying those principles skilfully in their daily work, yet they receive no special training, much less are they required to attain a standard of efficiency as teachers. At present, so far as we are aware, the Nursing Board of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service is the only authority which requires nurses in this country to pass through a special course of

training, and to give evidence of their practical ability to teach before recognizing them as competent to do so. Yet the efficiency of nurses when trained and certificated, and, therefore, the safety of the public largely depends on the competence, or otherwise of teachers of nurses.

It is high time to recognize that to hold a certificate of training does not qualify a nurse to undertake the duties of instructing others. The art of teaching is one for which only a limited proportion of nurses are fitted, and they can only acquire it as the result of special training.

Nothing would do more to raise the standard of nursing education or give greater prestige to a body of women who, in many instances are giving skilled instruction of great value with quite inadequate recognition, than the registration of their teaching qualifications.

The problem which the Teachers Registration Council has had to consider in drafting its regulations has been, as the *Times* points out to "steer between laxity and severity. To lower the standard of qualification unduly would be to turn the Register into a mere directory, incapable of giving any status of worth to those placed upon it; to set up too high a standard would be to deprive it of the necessary support." Our contemporary further draws attention to "the significance of the movement, not to teachers only, but to the nation at large. It rests now with all teachers to take up the membership which is thus offered to them; if the Register receives the support to which the labours of this representative Council justly entitle it, the way will be clear to the further work of organizing and raising the great profession to which the youth of the nation must necessarily be entrusted." These remarks apply with equal force to the registration of trained nurses and those who instruct them.

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